



King's Lynn Town Investment Plan

February 2021

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Foreword

Leader Cllr Brian Long

Covid-19 has had a huge impact on people in King's Lynn. Alongside the tragic effects of the virus itself on individuals and families, residents have faced uncertainty about jobs and wages and businesses have seen reduced trade with many forced to partially close or make big changes to how they work. But in this extremely challenging time there have also been so many examples of people helping each other out, of local businesses turning their expertise to provide equipment to NHS Nightingale hospitals, and of our town centre businesses helping each other with getting open again and doing everything they can to keep staff and people safe. King's Lynn folk care about each other and about the town and this has really shone through.

This plan is based on over a year of engagement, discussion and design by the people of King's Lynn. It sets out what we need now to help us deal with the impacts of Covid-19 and help our short-term recovery. For the longer-term it sets out our plans to reduce congestion, bring back new experiences and develop our cultural offer in the town centre, support new and growing businesses and bring more people back to live in our unique historic town centre. We have made a good start with recent investment in the School of Nursing, this plan sets out a clear case for the further investment needed and the difference it will make.

Above all this is a plan by King's Lynn people. Our Town Deal Board has debated and collaborated over our challenges and opportunities. 200 young people got involved in sharing ideas and views, over 100 businesses did the same through workshops, surveys and web events. That much of this took place during Covid-19 restrictions is further proof of how committed local people are.

Town Deal Board Chair Graham Purkins, CTO at Merxin

At a time of increased challenge and uncertainty, the Town's Fund and our Town Investment Plan present us with a unique opportunity to realise our ambitions and re-energise and reinvigorate King's Lynn. And at the very heart of our plan is the community.

The Town Board has been proactive in seeking the views of local people, businesses, stakeholders, and the council, to identify the challenges we face in a changing world - and the best solutions to address these. We have sought views on what matters to local people, especially in light of Covid-19, and invited ideas to improve our town and stimulate growth. We have listened to these many voices.

This collaborative approach is the hallmark of our Town Board too, a collective that encompasses a wide range of firms, civic and community organisations, elected councillors, and anchor institutions. All of us are resolute in seeing through delivery and long-term growth, and all of us are committed to providing the foundations for King's

Lynn to be the best it can be, for today and tomorrow. Together, we have shaped an aspirational vision.

And we will achieve this vision through projects that are deliverable and impactful. Such as a new School of Nursing to drive excellence in our healthcare, the creation of centres to provide skills training to support economic and employment recovery after Covid-19, and regeneration of our town centre and high street to adapt to modern life.

King's Lynn has a proud and illustrious history. We want to secure its bright and vibrant future too. And with this plan, we can do just that.

Executive summary

King's Lynn is the major commercial, retail and service centre for a large area of east Anglia, and the largest town in West Norfolk. Our historic port, medieval riverfront and town centre retain the only surviving Hanseatic buildings in the UK.

Today these historic gems are part of a town of 49,000, with a wider catchment area that spans 500sq miles and circa 250,000 people. The town is well connected by rail to Ely and Cambridge, with a direct service to London. The A47 connects to Norwich in the east in an hour and west to Peterborough and the Midlands. An important healthcare sector centred around the Queen Elizabeth Hospital – the town's largest employer, alongside major manufacturing and engineering firms. Many businesses have been here a long time and are deeply embedded in the local community.

King's Lynn has a vibrant and longstanding tradition of creative and cultural organisations, events and activity. Renowned as the 'Festival Town' from its year-round events programme including the King's Lynn Festival with classical music featuring internationally renowned performers - in its 70th year - and Festival Too, Europe's largest free open air popular music event. King's Lynn's visitor economy is built on its hospitality, retail and leisure offer, including The Walks historic urban park, and within close proximity to the Sandringham Estate, Castle Rising and the Norfolk coastline from Hunstanton, with King's Lynn the nearest train station to all these major national visitor assets.

As with many towns, the role that King's Lynn has played in the lives of its residents and the much larger population it serves has changed over the years and is continuing to do so.

A lack of integrated investment together with out of town retail and residential growth has led to different areas of the town being less well connected, and major assets like the historic area less well used than it should be. Overall the town centre offer has not kept pace with increased demand for town centre living and new cultural and leisure experiences to replace rapidly declining retail.

Local residents have less access to opportunities than they should. Wages are below regional and national levels, and firms struggle to recruit to certain roles, with the availability of skills a big issue. Too many young people here don't get the opportunities they deserve, with fewer than average staying on in full time education post school and GCSE attainment is low.

Covid-19 has made this difficult situation worse. It has hit King's Lynn hard, with JSA claimants rising faster than elsewhere and footfall in the town centre declining further.

This Town Investment Plan sets out a clear plan of action and investment to tackle these issues – to secure our recovery from Covid-19, shift towards a zero-carbon economy and secure the long-term success of our residents and businesses. Over the last year residents, businesses and a range of local institutions have worked together, through Vision King's Lynn and the Town Board, to set clear priorities and a vision for King's Lynn that delivers:

- *New opportunities for skills and jobs for our young people and all those affected by Covid-19*
- *Growing innovative businesses*
- *A repurposed town centre with new experiences and enterprise*
- *A high-quality residential and leisure offer in the historic town core and riverfront*
- *A sustainably connected town*

We have prioritised a package of interventions and investments that have been shown to have the greatest future impact on delivering these priorities, based on clear evidence that blends both independent analysis with an in depth programme of engagement and codesign with residents, businesses and local organisations.

These include a new King's Lynn Youth and employment pledge, to ensure all young people and anyone whose job is affected by Covid-19 gets the support they need to access training and employment. Complementing the recently funded School of Nursing, a new Multi User Community Hub in the town centre will provide additional skills and employment support to local people of all ages.

We will invest in new cycle and walking routes, alongside a new gyratory system to reduce traffic and improve air quality in the town centre. A new creative hub will provide opportunities for cultural and creative businesses at the White Barn, next to a refurbished Guildhall, close to the first phase of riverfront regeneration. We will repurpose historic buildings and retail units, providing new, high-quality homes in the town centre that are 15 minutes' walk from a direct train to Cambridge and London, alongside new leisure experiences and opportunities for small start-up businesses.

We have integrated all our work and investment plans across a number of different local and national funding streams (including High Street Heritage Action Zone and Accelerated Construction Programme brought together in our spatial plan), to develop an aligned package of investment from Government

A summary of Town Deal funded projects can be found below, including individual funding ask, timeline and the element of our vision that they deliver against.

Summary of Town Deal funded projects				
Theme 	Project 	Funding Ask 	Timeline 	King's Lynn Vision 
Innovative, growing businesses and skilled workforce	Youth and Retraining Pledge	£450k revenue	Delivery 2021-2023	A skilled workforce for growing industry New skills and jobs for those affected by Covid-19
	St George's Guildhall Complex	£4.85m capital	Construction and delivery 2022-2024	A skilled workforce for growing industry Growing innovative businesses A revived historic core
	Multiuser Community Hub	£4.36m capital	Construction and delivery 2021-2025	New skills and jobs for those affected by Covid-19 A repurposed town centre
	Innovation & Collaboration Incubator	£8m capital	Construction 2022-2024	A skilled workforce for growing industry Growing innovative businesses
Sustainably connected town	Active and Clean Connectivity	£7.5m capital	Construction 2021-2025	A sustainably connected town
Historic riverfront and repurposed town centre	Riverfront Regeneration	£5.85m capital	Delivery 2021-2025	A repurposed town centre A revived historic core and riverfront
	Town Centre Repurposing	£1.75m capital	Delivery 2021-2024	A repurposed town centre
	Public Realm	£250k capital	Delivery 2020-2023	A repurposed town centre

1 Context analysis

King's Lynn Today

King's Lynn is the commercial, retail and service centre for a large area of east Anglia, and the largest town in West Norfolk. The town itself has a population of 49,000 and its wider catchment area spans 500sq miles of the Fens, Norfolk, south Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire and circa 250,000 people, including the smaller towns of Wisbech, Swaffham, Hunstanton and Downham Market.

King's Lynn is well-connected by rail to Ely and Cambridge, with a direct service to London. The A47, A10 and A17 are important routes for logistics in the town, and connect to Norwich in the east in an hour and west to Peterborough and the Midlands.

Major companies include paper and paperboard manufacturer Palm Paper, drug delivery manufacturer Recipharm, and equipment suppliers Snap-on Diagnostic. With a long history here manufacturing continues to thrive in King's Lynn, with firms concentrated around the successful Hardwick and North Lynn Industrial Estates along with the developing Nar Ouse Enterprise Zone. Many businesses have been here a long time and are deeply embedded in the local community. Others have invested here more recently, attracted by the high quality of life, good connectivity and affordable sites and homes.

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is a major anchor institution and overall healthcare is the largest employer in King's Lynn, accounting for 21.2% of jobs. The hospital is the region's largest with a range of departments including accident and emergency services, the Macmillan Centre and a day surgery centre.

King's Lynn is also a major centre of education, with three large secondary schools, King Edward VII Academy, King's Lynn Academy and Springwood High School, with the availability of Sixth Form at King Edward VII Academy and Springwood. The College of West Anglia is one of the largest providers of education and training in Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, offering A-levels, vocational courses and apprenticeships. The college is partnered with Anglia Ruskin University to offer higher education courses including degrees, foundation degrees and Higher National Diplomas, all on the King's Lynn Campus and will be the location of the new School of Nursing.

The town's riverfront and historic core is a unique medieval asset of international significance, quoted as a 'jewel in a wrapper', with a vibrant and longstanding tradition of creative and cultural activity. We have cultural, historical and leisure assets that if collectively brought together with vision and investment, could be maximised as a draw for visitors. King's Lynn's visitor economy is built on its hospitality, retail and leisure offer, with attractions such as Lynn Museum, Stories of Lynn, Alive Corn Exchange, the Majestic Cinema, True's Yard Fisherfolk Museum and shopping in the Vancouver Quarter drawing visitors to the town centre.

The role that King's Lynn has played in the lives of its residents and the much larger population it serves has changed over the years and is continuing to do so. Many of the issues we face are because King's Lynn needs investment to adapt to changes in what residents need and want from their town and how they use it. The combination of a much larger catchment area than most similar sized towns, recent housing growth and unique historic riverfront and town core, means that King's Lynn means many different things to different communities and users.

Over the last year residents, businesses and a range of local institutions have worked together, through Vision King's Lynn and the Town Board, in an extensive period of discussion and engagement about the town and its future. A striking feature has been both the desire of local people to get involved and the consistent view that King's Lynn's different assets and areas feel too disconnected, without really benefiting as much as they could from each other. In many large market towns this combination of historic assets, commercial buildings, retail, leisure and residential areas exist together in a mix that is instantly recognisable to residents and visitors alike. But residents and business do not see this as working as well as it could in King's Lynn. This is not just about physical connectivity. Residents report, and the evidence supports, a sense of not being well enough connected to opportunities to start businesses, get involved in culture and arts, learn new skills and find lasting careers.

For example, King's Lynn has a genuinely unique historic town core and riverfront, with the only remaining Hanseatic buildings in England and high-quality historic and cultural venues. But these assets are both relatively inaccessible and seen by too many residents as not being for them.

The relatively modern town centre retail area tells a similar story. The Hardwick out of town retail area is very large, even in comparison with similar sites in comparable sized towns, reflecting its wide catchment area. It inevitably encourages residents to travel out of the town rather than into the centre and reduces the extent to which people from the wider catchment travel into town. The town centre retail area and the historic core and waterfront seem, in their different ways, to have been unable to adapt and change fast enough to develop an alternative offer to out of town living, leisure and shopping.

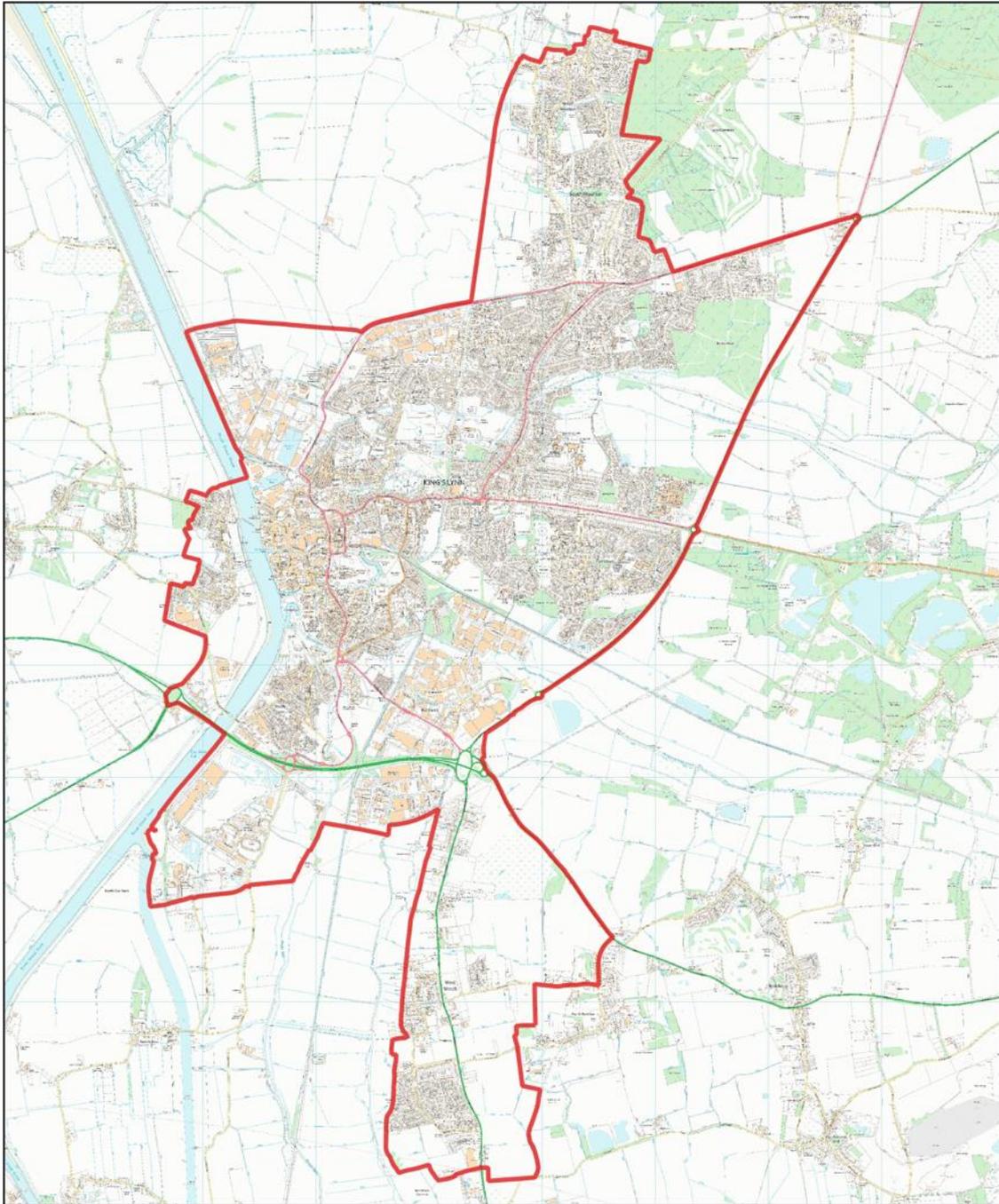
Our strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities are set out in more detail in the sections below. But there are three major issues which local people and businesses have prioritised in this plan:

- Progression from school is low and overall skills levels are low, meaning that people leave, earnings are lower, and companies find it hard to recruit.
- Connectivity between different areas of the town is poor, leading to congestion, poor air quality and lower footfall. Physical connection from rail/bus station through to the historic core is poor and cannot cope with modern day traffic in the town centre, creating tailbacks on the outskirts and leads to missed opportunities to capitalise on the visitor offer.

- The historic town centre and riverfront is under used and town centre retail is declining fast. We need to repurpose it for the future whilst protecting its heritage, so that more people want to live, work and study in this area of the town

The following section explores these different aspects of our town in more detail, setting out the evidence of need, opportunity and the interventions we have prioritised to deliver our vision:

King's Lynn Town Fund Boundary



Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**
Tel. 01553 616200
Fax. 01553 691663

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Ordnance Survey 100024314

Legend

 Kings Lynn Town Fund



1:32,000

17/12/2019

Strengths and opportunities



With a history dating back to life as a medieval port, King's Lynn has an **important historic core**



A **commercial and service hub** for a large rural hinterland



A place where **businesses can start and grow** with a supportive and innovative business community



Strengths in **healthcare and manufacturing**, together making up 37% of employment



Space to grow and good quality of life close to nature and in a historic centre



High levels of cycling and walking, with 17% of journeys to work compared with 8% nationally



Ultrafast fibre broadband coverage is low at 1.5% compared with 12.7% for the UK

King's Lynn

Challenges



High employment in retail and **accelerating high street vacancy rates**



Earnings are lower, with median annual pay at £21,993 compared with £25,118 in England



Lower skills levels, with 21.4% of people with NVQ level 4+ qualifications compared with 39.3% nationally



Poorly connected town centre between key areas

2 Opportunities and Challenges

King's Lynn has major opportunities and selling points:

- *a strong residential and commercial offer, the space to grow and the appetite to develop further, with a track record of delivery*
- *major businesses and successful SMEs who are committed to the town and to playing a leading role within it*
- *residents that care deeply about the town and are creative, resilient people*

But there are challenges to tackle

- *high employment in retail and accelerated vacant units in the town centre*
- *high road congestion and poor air quality*
- *lower skills and earnings, poor school attainment*
- *different parts of the town poorly connected*

The following sections identify in more detail the opportunities and challenges and evidence of need that our Town Investment Plan and wider strategy is designed to address.

It is set in three sections that reflect the Town's Fund Guidance:

- Business, Jobs and Skills
- Regenerating our town centre and riverfront
- Connectivity

Business, Jobs and Skills

More than half of employment in King's Lynn is in health (21%), manufacturing (16%) and retail (14%). All employ more people here than on average¹. Our businesses have been core to developing this Town Deal and are committed to working together and with partners to ensure that residents and firms have the opportunities and skills they need for future success and competitiveness. Both the economic evidence and feedback from businesses and residents shows there are a clear set of challenges that we have to address.

Looking at King's Lynn's top 10 companies by turnover, reaffirms King's Lynn's manufacturing specialism, particularly advanced manufacturing and engineering as set out below.

Important healthcare centre with a recruitment challenge

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is an anchor institution for the town and regional healthcare cluster. Unsurprisingly, the hospital is King's Lynn's largest healthcare employer with 3,000 employees, followed by Children's & Adult Social Services (400) and Norfolk Community Health and Care Centre (200).² The important sector will create opportunities for skills and high-skilled jobs for young people and those looking to reskill in the years ahead.

Strong manufacturing, but with a productivity challenge

Manufacturing and engineering firms have a long history here and continue to see King's Lynn as an attractive and good value location. Our proximity to Cambridge and connectivity to London, whilst offering a high quality of life and being more affordable has also attracted newer innovative firms such as Inivos and Merxin.

Manufacturing is the highest-productivity sector in King's Lynn at £101,000 per job³ and accounting for 16% of employment⁴. There are more manufacturing jobs here than in most towns (UK average 8% employment). However, the sector has experienced no growth in GVA between 2013 and 2018 and has struggled to recruit highly-skilled staff locally and attract new talent to the town. Our large and small manufacturing firms are clear that skills development and innovation are absolutely core to their future success and growth.

¹ All ONS BRES (2018)

² Experian Market IQ

³ ONS, Balanced GVA by industry, 2018

⁴ ONS, BRES, 2018

King's Lynn's top 10 companies by turnover are a range of innovative manufacturers and engineers:

King's Lynn top 10 companies by turnover		
1	Foster Refrigerator	Manufacturer of commercial refrigeration equipment. Global headquarters in King's Lynn and a major exporter.
2	Palm Paper	Manufacturer of newsprint and paper from 100% recycled fibres. The King's Lynn paper mill is the widest, largest and most powerful newsprint machine in the world.
3	Pilgrim's Pride	Manufacturer of pork and ham products, supplying major multiple retailers and the food service industry.
4	Recipharm	A global market leader in the design, development and manufacture of drug delivery devices, working in partnership with the major pharmaceutical companies, as well as other medical devices.
5	Greenyard Frozen UK	Manufacturer of frozen vegetables, supplying major multiple retailers and the food service industry in the UK and Europe
6	Mars Food UK	Manufacturers of main meal products under the Uncle Ben's and Dolmio brands
7	Williams Refrigeration	Manufacturer of commercial refrigeration equipment. Global headquarters in King's Lynn and a major exporter.
8	Snap-On Diagnostics	Developer and manufacturer of electronic diagnostic equipment and software for the automotive sectors in the UK and overseas.
9	SKF Cooper	Global market leader in the design and manufacture of split roller bearings. Global headquarters in King's Lynn and a major exporter.
10	KL Technologies	Manufacturers of micro-porous membranes, ceramic filters and technical ceramic manufacturing equipment. Global headquarters in King's Lynn and a major exporter

Overall strong demand for commercial space

There is good evidence of continuing demand for commercial space, start-up and grow on facilities. Industrial space value is closer to average at £5 per sq ft compared with £7 per sq ft for the country as a whole. As a result, there has been a lack of investment in high quality, modern commercial space by the private sector.

The Nar Ouse Enterprise Zone has seen strong demand for businesses wanting to be based in this accessible and prominent part of the town with new, high quality premises. The King's Lynn Innovation Centre (KLIC), has many businesses that have outgrown the original space⁵, but want to stay in the town and be close to collaboration and networking opportunities. The Council is collaborating with New Anglia LEP on investment in new commercial units and an extension to the Enterprise Zones business rate relief period beyond the current March 2021 by would be a welcome boost to support new and growing businesses considering moving to the site.

Nar Ouse Enterprise Zone

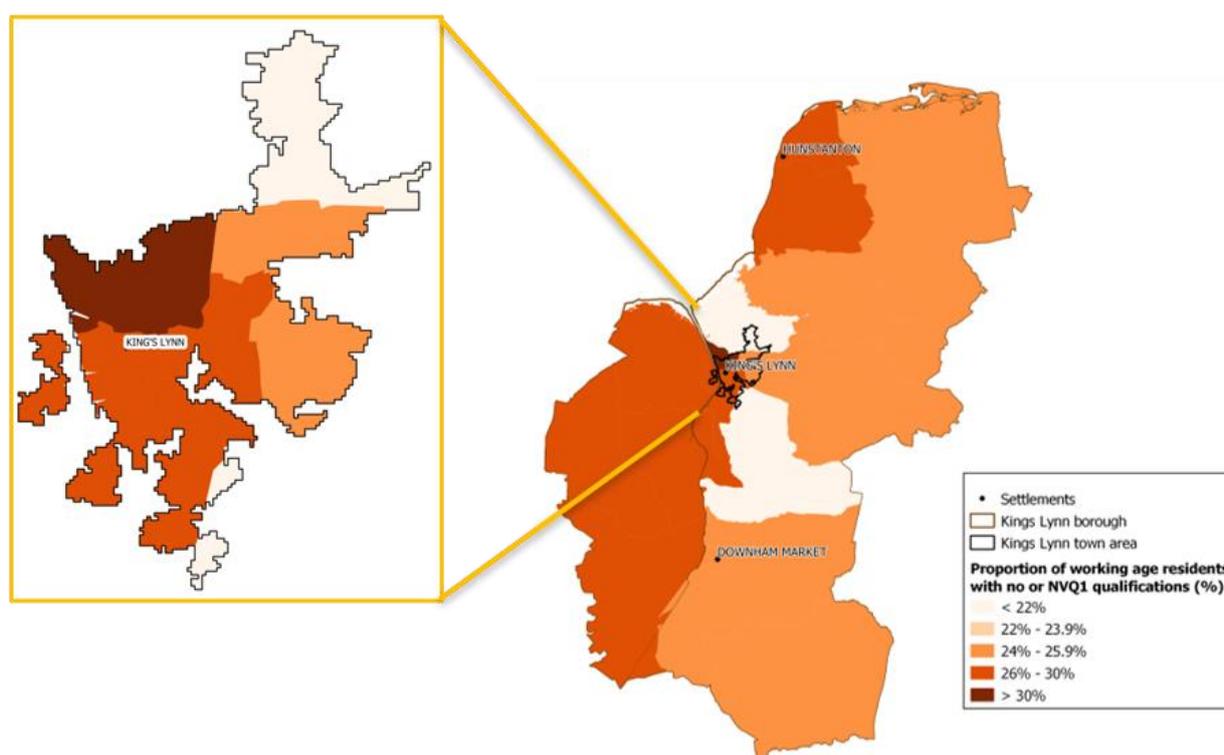


⁵ Feedback from Town Board Business Workshops

Skills levels are low and recruitment is difficult, reflected in lower wage levels for residents missing out on opportunities

Qualification levels in King's Lynn are lower than average, 21% of the working population has NVQ level 4+ qualifications compared with 39% nationally, and 11% of people with no qualifications, compared with 8% nationally⁶. This is partly a reflection of our business base, with less highly-skilled jobs and businesses, but firms report real difficulty recruiting.⁷ Of young people who go on to university, many do not return, and the town has experienced a drop in population for those aged 15-44 in recent years⁸. A lack of attractive and diverse living options for young skilled professionals marks one barrier to increasing opportunities.

Proportion of residents with no or NVQ level 1 qualifications attainment (2018)



Source: Source: Metro Dynamics estimates based on ONS APS (2018) and Census (2011) data

The map shows the proportion of working age residents with no qualifications or NVQ1 attainment in 2018 for the King's Lynn and West Norfolk borough and King's Lynn town area. Within the town the darker areas reflect communities where our low wage, low skill problem is highly concentrated.

Overall, our highest employing sectors are lower paid than elsewhere, which is reflected in average wage levels that are also lower. (£21,993 compared with £25,118 respectively⁹).

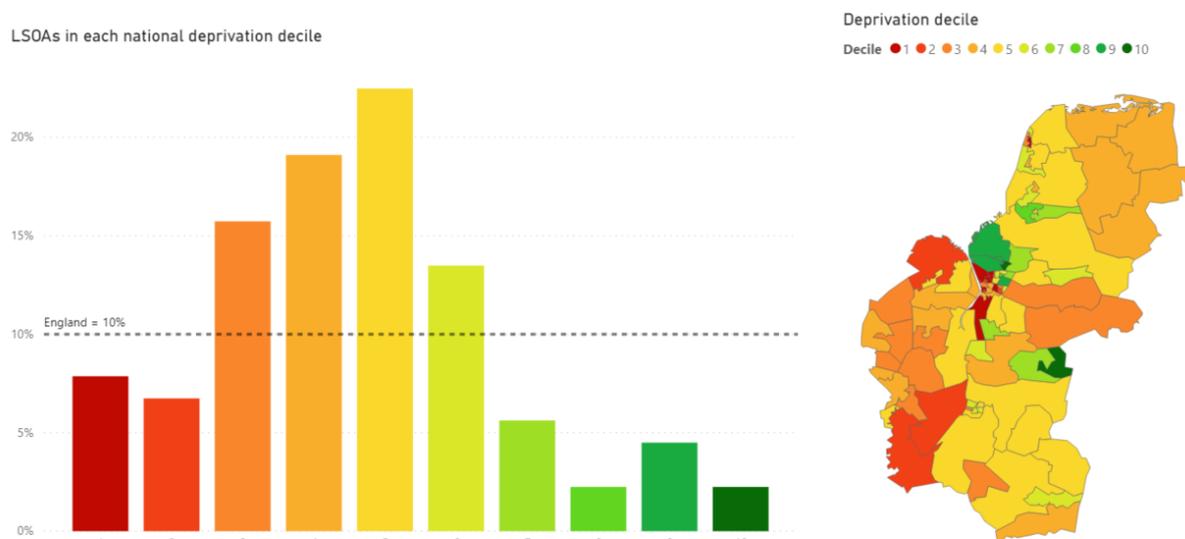
⁶ ONS, Annual Population Survey, 2018

⁷ Business Workshops and Survey 2020

⁸ Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Housing Needs Assessment, 2020.

⁹ ONS, Small area income estimates for middle layer super output areas, England and Wales, 2017/18

Deprivation is relatively worse in King's Lynn than the surrounding areas



The Index of Multiple Deprivation is a relative measure of deprivation constructed by combining seven domains of deprivation according to their respective weights.¹⁰ Decile 1 represents the 10% most deprived geographies, while decile 10 represents the 10% least deprived. The Borough falls below the England average at the extremes of the deciles, scoring 7.87% for decile 1, and well below average for decile 10 at 2.25%. The map shows King's Lynn in decile 1¹¹.

Young people are not getting the skills they need

Our young people also face barriers to getting the skills they need to succeed in the future economy (see diagram).

At 84.9%, King's Lynn & West Norfolk's **year 13 pupil participation** in education is below the England and Norfolk averages.

POLAR (Participation of Local Areas in higher education) - King's Lynn town, South Lynn & West Lynn's is 17.4%, below Norfolk at 29.5% and England at 39.6%.

11.1% of King's Lynn and West Norfolk residents have **no qualifications**, compared to: 7.4% in the East of England and 7.6% in Great Britain

8% increase in **disadvantaged pupils** achieving **GCSE English and Maths** at grade 4 in King's Lynn and West Norfolk, compared to 3% in Norfolk and no increase nationally



¹⁰ The domains are: Income, Employment, Education, Skills and Training, Health and Disability, Crime, Barriers to Housing Services, and Living Environment.

¹¹ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2020.

Progression from school is also much lower than average and GCSE attainment is lower than Norfolk and England, despite recent improvements in helping disadvantaged children¹².

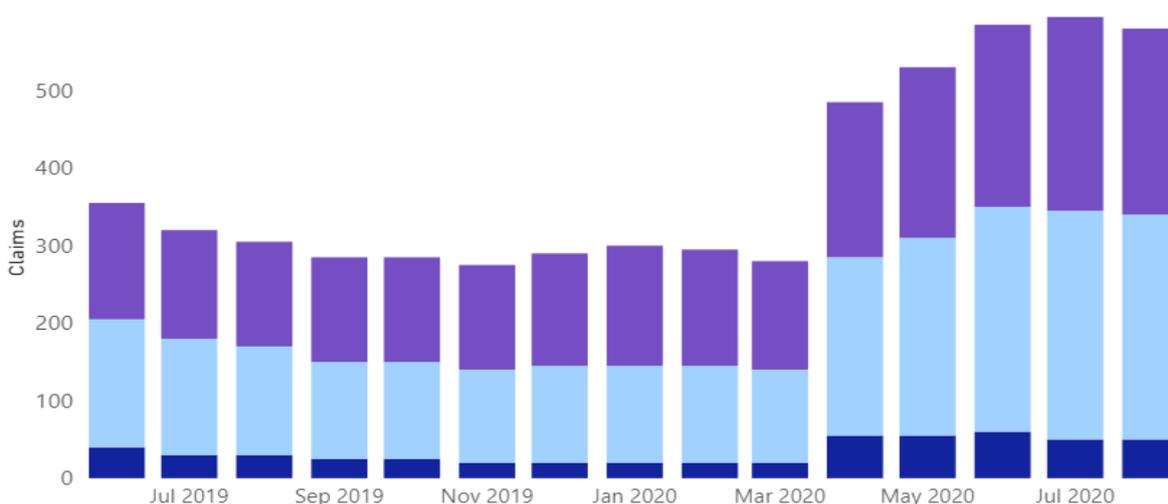
Overall, the level of participation within the King’s Lynn and West Norfolk labour market is comparable with the rest of the UK, but of those who are inactive fewer are seeking work and health related economic inactivity is higher than average. ¹³

Covid-19 means people of all ages face unemployment and the need to retrain

Since March 2020, total JSA claims in the Borough as a whole have risen faster than the UK, with 578 claims in August compared to 278 in March, a 107.9% increase, compared to 95.3% for the UK as a whole. 50 of the 578 claims have been made from people aged 16-24. So far, the increase in claims from this group (150%) has been less than for the rest of the country at 178.7%.

Job seekers allowance claims in King’s Lynn and West Norfolk by age group

Age group ● Aged 16-24 ● Aged 25-49 ● Aged 50-64

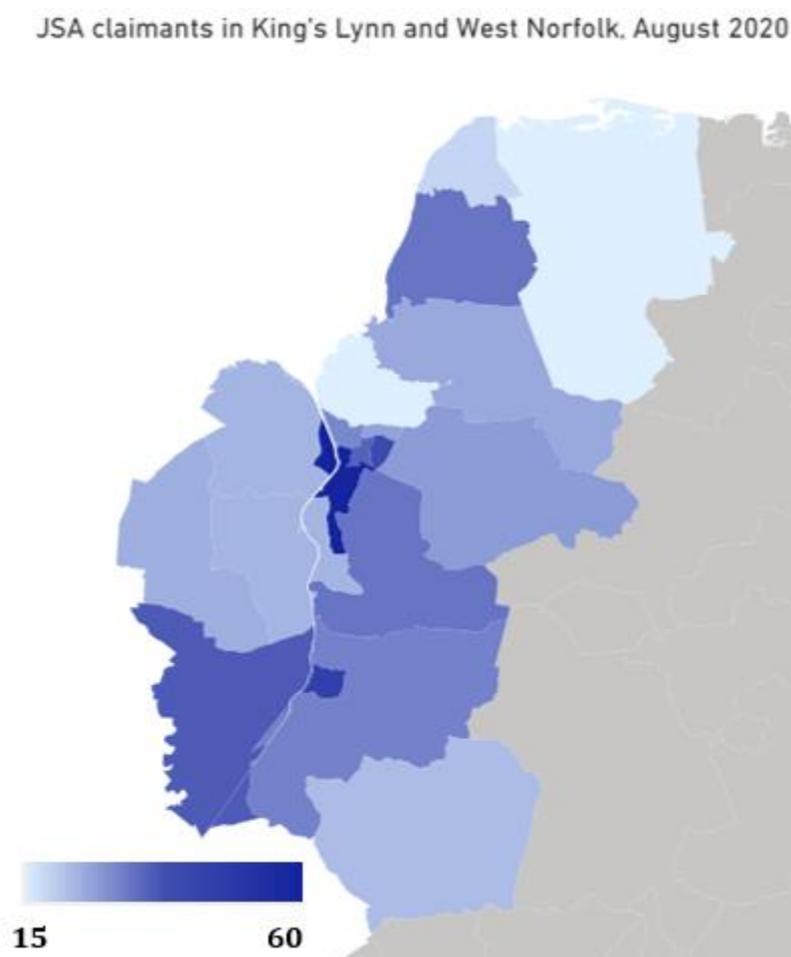


Source: ONS

¹² 8% increase in disadvantaged pupils achieving GCSE English and Maths at grade 4 in King’s Lynn and West Norfolk, compared to: 3% in Norfolk and no increase nationally. **GCSE attainment** – standard pass (grades 9-4) across a pupil’s best eight subjects is 41.8% in King’s Lynn and West Norfolk, below the average in Norfolk (45.3%) England (46.7%).

¹³ Annual Population Survey 2019

The map below shows JSA claimants in August 2020 concentrated in the area covered by the Town Deal, Approximately, 202 of the 578 claims in the authority are from King's Lynn Town.



Source: ONS

We need to create more business and increase enterprise as a career

Fewer new businesses are starting in the town. The business birth rate in King's Lynn before Covid-19 was 10% compared with 13% across England, and the business churn rate was 19% compared with 25% for England¹⁴.

We need to support more people to successfully start and grow a business and provide the spaces and support that businesses need to grow and to innovate. There are real opportunities amongst the Covid-19 challenges – for jobs and new businesses in town centre food and leisure, manufacturing, engineering, construction and creative industries. Our Town Deal and response to Covid-19 gives us a real opportunity and need to make sure they happen and to get local people, businesses, schools and the college connected up and working

¹⁴ ONS, Business Demography, 2018

together. That is what local partners have come together to achieve and our plan is set out in the strategy section below.

Regenerating our town centre and riverfront

Protecting and repurposing a unique historic core and riverfront

Our historic port town and riverfront is a major and genuinely unique asset for King's Lynn. Historic England sees it as being of international significance with a 900-year history as a Hanseatic port town. The historic cluster of buildings that make up the old port town is a Heritage Action Zone and includes the Hanseatic warehouses on the water, the 1095 Minster and the late-medieval Town Hall among narrow cobbled streets. Between the historic core and modern retail centre is the Tuesday Market Place and Saturday Market Place. Large areas of the riverfront are derelict, with vacant brownfield sites between unique old buildings. Close to the old town centre there are a small but growing number of high-quality independent food outlets and shops, but there is little for people to do to keep them there. Overall, residents feel that the small night-time economy and a lack of culture, music and arts experiences is still a barrier to town centre living.¹⁵

Both the riverfront and historic town centre present major opportunities as attractive places to live, work and visit, close to the water and surrounded by character and culture. Both are 15 minutes' walk from a direct train to London and Cambridge, but the connection is poor and does not lead you to the historic core or riverfront. Repeated studies, including Historic England's Urban Panel have emphasised the opportunity here and the evidence of the importance of water and historic buildings in many national and global examples of successful regeneration and renewal, often with a large residential element.

Our local core strategy reinforces the need to increase density and support repurposing of the town centre.

Unlocking the potential of the historic riverfront and town faces challenges and barriers:

- The historic core is ringed by cleared housing sites being used as surface car parks and the connecting roads are both congested with no real gateway. Connections with the train station are not linked well to the town centre and approaching the historic core and riverfront
- The town centre suffers low population density, with recent residential development focused on sites further out of town
- Commercial property values are lower than average. Retail space value in King's Lynn before Covid-19 was £17 per sq ft compared with £26 per sq ft in Britain, and office space value was £11 per sq ft compared with £27 per sq ft in Britain.
- Investor interest in hotel and residential development continues, but the costs of remediating contamination from previous industrial usage and putting in place

¹⁵ Vision King's Lynn Resident Survey and drop in sessions December 2019

sustainable flood defences mean the sites are unviable without further public sector investment which is beyond the means of the Borough Council.

A fast-changing retail centre

The population of King's Lynn grew through 1960s development, influenced by the town's direct rail link to London. New parts of the town were developed as overspill from the capital with housing, and the retail presence in the town centre boomed between the railway station and the Tuesday Market Place, which connects the historic core to the modern high street.

The Vancouver Quarter dominates this part of the town and is the focus of the more modern retail offer. Built in 1960s and subsequently redeveloped in 2005, for a number of years it exceeded national footfall trends, but recently it has seen footfall reductions and a decline in national stores and higher vacancy rates.

The immediate impact of Covid-19 on the local economy has exacerbated trends in falling footfall around the high street and accelerated the rate of retail properties becoming vacant. Prominent examples of this is the Burtons Store and large Debenhams buildings. Over the past few months, other national retailers have followed suit. These buildings are located on the part of the high street linking to the historic quarter.

Residents, particularly young people, and businesses want a vibrant and attractive town centre with reasons to visit, they see the opportunity to better use and link existing spaces through pop up shops, small scale but high-impact public realm improvements to create more opportunities for outside seating areas for cafés and restaurants and more community spaces, together with reduced congestion and more strategic, accessible parking.¹⁶

Major housing growth

King's Lynn has grown in recent years, and with more than 5,000 homes planned. Alongside the need to prioritise town centre densification, as set out above, we are also benefiting from the major growth areas in the town centre, West Winch, South Wootton and Parkway.

¹⁶ June 2020 Business Insight survey

Connectivity

King's Lynn is well connected by rail and the A10 to Cambridge and London and by the A47 to Norwich, Peterborough and the Midlands and North. We serve a large area of over 500sq miles, with many smaller towns and villages, including the tourist hotspots of the North Norfolk coast and Hunstanton as well as large areas of the Fens.

The wider economy of the East of England has grown fast in recent years and is a major engine of UK growth, linked to the Cambridge, Oxford, Milton Keynes Arc. Our relative affordability, high quality of life and good rail and road connectivity is a real opportunity for us to contribute and benefit from this wide regional growth – we are an attractive location for business investment and within reach for people looking for longer but less frequent commutes. The opportunity for new homes in both historic buildings and new build in the town centre will provide accessible town centre living in a unique historic environment close to the station.

Bringing people into the town cleanly and safely

Most of these communities rely on the car and will continue to do so, as local bus services have declined and the only local rail line is the King's Lynn to London route. Rail service usage has increased, with further improvements planned, but bus service levels are low, and business and resident perception is that villages close to town were poorly served. Longer journeys are likely to incur multiple fares from more than one travel operator and bus fare levels are not competitive with town centre car parking charges. There are therefore limited opportunities for high-quality, cheap public transport services and healthier active modes of travel.

Car use in King's Lynn is high, with clear pinch points for congestion, on junctions on the A149, in the town centre and around the Southgate roundabout, with driving the most common primary mode of transport to work at 69% of journeys. A historic passenger ferry operates from West Lynn to the town centre which is highly regarded and well used; there is scope to invest and increase service capacity of this unique service.

Cycling and walking is high for short journeys, with 17% of journeys to work compared with 8% for England. There is therefore a base of short journey active travel in the town on which to build and evidence of local demand for different forms of private transport.

Congestion areas are worst during weekday rush hours, and on weekends when routes to access nearby coastline, leisure and tourism attractions are an issue. This raises air quality concerns, limits growth opportunities for residential areas and access to town services, and limits the attraction for people travelling into the town centre.

Digital connectivity

93% of premises have access to superfast broadband, just below the regional and national averages, both of 96%. However, fibre to the premises (FTTP) coverage is low, and actual broadband speeds vary, download speeds range from 1.5 – 50 Mbit/s across the King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough and 3.8 - 40 Mbit/s in the King's Lynn town area. We are working

with Norfolk County Council on making private investment in broadband rollout work for King's Lynn through the Better Broadband for Norfolk programme.

The sections below set out the vision, priorities and actions we have developed to tackle these challenges and take the opportunities.

2 Strategy

Vision and Priorities

The Town Investment Plan has been developed by local people and businesses as a focused and strategic plan to address the opportunities and challenges that King's Lynn faces in a changing world. Visions are often just a bunch of words assembled in a way that everyone found least offensive. In King's Lynn we are taking a different approach.

We have worked closely with residents and businesses, including young people and a wide range of local organisations to combine the relevant evidence and data with insights and experience from local people to agree 5 priorities for investment. These are the things we want to achieve and which drive all our investment:

Our mission for King's Lynn

- ***New opportunities for skills and jobs for our young people and all those affected by Covid-19*** and needing to reskill, linked to demand from local employers and opportunities in local sectors
- ***Growing innovative businesses*** - attracted by our connectivity and high quality of life and supported by the networks and collaborative support that businesses need
- ***A repurposed town centre with new experiences and businesses*** - increasing footfall, enhancing cultural opportunities, with its different parts better connected
- ***A high-quality residential and leisure offer in the historic town core and riverfront*** - attracting new people to live and work in the town centre, whilst protecting our unique heritage.
- ***A sustainably connected town*** - through reduced congestion and better connectivity between the town, its catchment area and residential growth areas, creating safer walking and cycling routes and supporting remote working

The sections below show how the projects and investment we seek will deliver these aims.

A long-term, integrated plan for renewal and success

The long-term economic impacts of Covid-19 and the trends it is accelerating are still emerging, but this is the first stage of our evolving recovery plan. It also sets out the major investments we are making to speed up our transition to a zero-carbon economy, including harnessing some of the positive environmental impacts from Covid-19. The Town Board, Borough Council, partners and residents have all been clear that the town needs a long-term, integrated strategy to deliver the opportunities we have and that also addresses today's problems with actions that can start now.

Summary of wider King's Lynn investment projects

Theme 	Project 	Funding Town's Fund asks 	Timeline 	King's Lynn Vision 
Innovative, growing businesses and skilled workforce	Youth and Retraining Pledge	£450k revenue	Delivery 2021-2023	A skilled workforce for growing industry New skills and jobs for those affected by Covid-19
	St George's Guildhall Complex	£4.85m capital	Construction 2022-2024	A skilled workforce for growing industry Growing innovative businesses A revived historic core
	Multiuser Community Hub	£4.36m capital	Construction 2022-2025	New skills and jobs for those affected by Covid-19 A repurposed town centre
Sustainably connected town	Innovation & Collaboration Incubator	£8m capital	Construction 2022-2024	A skilled workforce for growing industry Growing innovative businesses
	Active and Clean Connectivity	£7.5m capital	Construction 2021-2025	A sustainably connected town
Historic riverfront and repurposed town centre	Riverfront Regeneration	£5.85m capital	Delivery 2021-2025	A repurposed town centre A revived historic core and riverfront
	Town Centre Repurposing	£1.75m capital	Delivery 2021-2024	A repurposed town centre
	Public Realm	£250k capital	Delivery 2020-2023	A repurposed town centre
Projects funded and underway				
Innovative, growing businesses and skilled workforce	School of Nursing	£597,528 TF accelerated funding capital	Open by September 2021	A skilled workforce for growing industry New skills and jobs for those affected by Covid-19
Projects in development pipeline				
	Town centre housing	£10.78m capital	Sites built by between August 2024 and March 2029	A repurposed town centre High quality residential offer
	South Gates Gateway	£20m capital	2022-27	A repurposed town centre
	West Winch growth area	£65m capital	2021-2026	High quality residential offer
	KL Area Transport Strategy	£TBC	TBC	A sustainably connected town

A plan developed by local residents and businesses

Our mission and interventions have been developed and shaped with the local community and businesses, building on a programme of active community engagement that was launched just before the Town's Fund to bring together ideas and solutions for the growing challenges the town faced. Our mission is based on the very clear and consistent view of businesses and residents that there is a real opportunity to better integrate the towns social, physical and environmental assets so that all its communities and users can benefit, with a particular focus on creating new opportunities for young people and tackling low skills.

Individual projects have also been developed in this way. More details are set out in the engagement section. The Multi User Community Hub and Guildhall and Creative Hub, for example, we designed and developed using input from young people about the skills opportunities they needed and from creative and cultural businesses about what was holding back growth and the expansion of wider community skills and job opportunities.

At the time of agreeing this plan, the full details of the Government's Levelling Up Fund and Shared Prosperity Funding, for example, are still being finalised. The impact of Covid and the pace of recovery is still evolving. So local partners are clear that this is a living plan and one that can and must evolve as both the opportunities for investment and the needs of the local economy change.

King's Lynn spatial strategy

As has been clear through feedback and engagement of residents and businesses, there is a real opportunity to better integrate and connect different parts of the town and make better use of our assets. How the town works physically has a real impact on the life experiences of our residents, including their access to jobs, skills, services and safe, active travel.

Our strategy is designed to improve connectivity between new and existing residential areas, employment centres, education and healthcare provision and the town centre, improving gateways and enabling safer, more active travel. Our aim here is both to bring more people into the town centre, open up new growth sites, improve digital connectivity and take up and make it easier for everyone to travel around the town as a whole, whilst reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality and further increasing active travel.

There are five principal interventions in this element of our plan:

- Our clean air programme includes a **new town centre gyratory and one-way system**, reducing congestion and improving traffic flow, for completion in 2023/24. This will also include public realm investment and improving signage and walking and cycling access between the station, town centre and riverfront.
- Our active connectivity programme will create **new cycling and walking routes** from the Parkway housing development, Enterprise Zone and, in the longer-term, from the West Winch housing growth area, ensuring that residents of 4,000 new homes have safe, active travel options to access the town, employment areas, and nearby schools through implementing our cycle and walking strategy
- The **Southgates regeneration** area will open up the historic South Gate as a major gateway asset for the town and address this bottleneck location in the longer term
- **Increasing the train service** to 8 cars, and in the longer-term increasing trains to London and Cambridge to half hourly will further improve our town centre residential and commercial and visitor offer.
- Continuing to **invest in digital connectivity**, including 5G roll out, through the Better Broadband for Norfolk programme



Four core economic areas of the town

1. Nar Ouse Enterprise Zone

The successful Nar Ouse Enterprise Zone and King's Lynn Innovation Centre are the core of a new economic area being developed for the town. Home to major established firms and newer growing businesses in all our sectors, including food production, pharmaceuticals, healthcare, engineering, and logistics.

Close to the Hardwick retail area and major West Winch housing growth area and well connected through the A47, A17 and A149 - this is where we are focussing our investment for future business location, investment and growth.

Interventions:

- The new Innovation & Collaboration Incubator for new and growing manufacturing, advanced engineering and technology businesses.

2. Modern town centre and retail area

The Vancouver Quarter and surrounding streets are the core of the town centre retail offer and have been affected hard by recent Covid-19 restrictions and long-term decline in footfall and changing retail trends.

Alongside supporting the immediate recovery and reopening of businesses, residents and businesses are clear that we have to act to repurpose this part of the town, make it easier to access and navigate and broaden out the offer and reasons for visiting.

There are real opportunities to make it easier for people to access skills and retraining and a range of other services, making the town's existing retail centre a place where people can get many more things done and provides a wider set of reasons to visit, which has been a strong theme of feedback from residents.



Interventions:

- Our major new **Multuser Community Hub** on the vacant Argos site, which will also open up the front of the listed Majestic Cinema and will provide a one stop shop for accessing a range of services, including wellbeing, skills and employment support.
- We will invest in **repurposing units**, for a mixture of meanwhile and longer-term uses and linking available space up to potential new business, leisure and creative uses.
- We will also invest in our **street scene, public realm and signage**, making it easier to navigate the town centre and provide infrastructure for town centre living, including immediate investment this year.
- The proposed **School of Nursing** will be sited on the town centre campus of the College of West Anglia (CWA). The new apprenticeship programme will attract 150 students who otherwise would have to travel to Norwich, Peterborough or Cambridge for their training.
- Releasing existing surface **car parks for new homes in the town centre**, and the development of a new 535 space car park with photovoltaic cells for EV charging. This will increase residential density in the town centre, creating new high-quality homes, through both new build and in existing historic buildings, all walkable from the train station, retail centre and riverfront.

3. Historic town and riverfront

The historic town and riverfront has long been both an asset and a source of frustration for local people. There is a long-term interest from investors in both residential and leisure opportunities in this part of the town, driven by increasing demand for UK tourism and rising residential prices and demand in other parts of the East of England. This is matched by short-term caution and a slowdown in activity driven by Covid-19 restrictions and market sentiment. After a long period of both under use and the failure of over-ambitious schemes, residents, business, civic groups and the Borough Council have worked together through Vision King's Lynn to set a clear set of deliverable and focussed priorities, backed up by integrating investment from the Heritage Action Zone and Town's Fund, with a realistic and targeted approach to securing private sector investment.



We are therefore using public investment to unlock a number of sites and projects that will drive future demand and growth, remediating and repurposing land and buildings and creating new business and creative opportunities.

Interventions:

- The restoration of **St George's Guildhall and the development of a new Creative Hub** will create a revitalised heritage and cultural attraction in the Guildhall complex using the unique selling points of the oldest theatre in the UK and the Shakespeare link. The complex will house 575 sqm of commercial space comprising co-working spaces based on hot-desking, offices, and designated space for creative communal use in makerspace and studios. Development of the White Barn will also create occasional performance or event spaces which could be used for productions or markets for food, arts and crafts. This will form part of meeting businesses' and residents' desire to see new experiences and a developed night-time economy in the town centre. Combined with the restoration of St George's Guildhall, these two facilities will transform the town's cultural amenities and offer.
- **Riverfront regeneration** constitutes the first phase of regeneration for King's Lynn's riverfront. Investment in new outdoor public realm and upgraded attractions and

facilities will improve the environment in preparation for further investment in leisure and residential development on this site. A riverside route will create continuous public landscape from the Outer Purfleet quayside to the Nar Loop - an ecological open space with potential to create a wetland habitat. This will combine civic character landscaping of the quayside with natural landscapes to the south of the town centre. This phase will also bring into use the Outer Purfleet dock for feature vessels and iconic Customs House as a visitor exhibition space - a key entrypoint and landmark from the end of the high street to the riverside - with dryside infrastructure for the visitor pontoons as part of the wider 'Sail the Wash' initiative and marketing campaign. This will be an enabling step for investment in residential, hospitality, leisure and culture - of which there is ongoing interest - at this part of the riverfront.

4. Housing growth areas

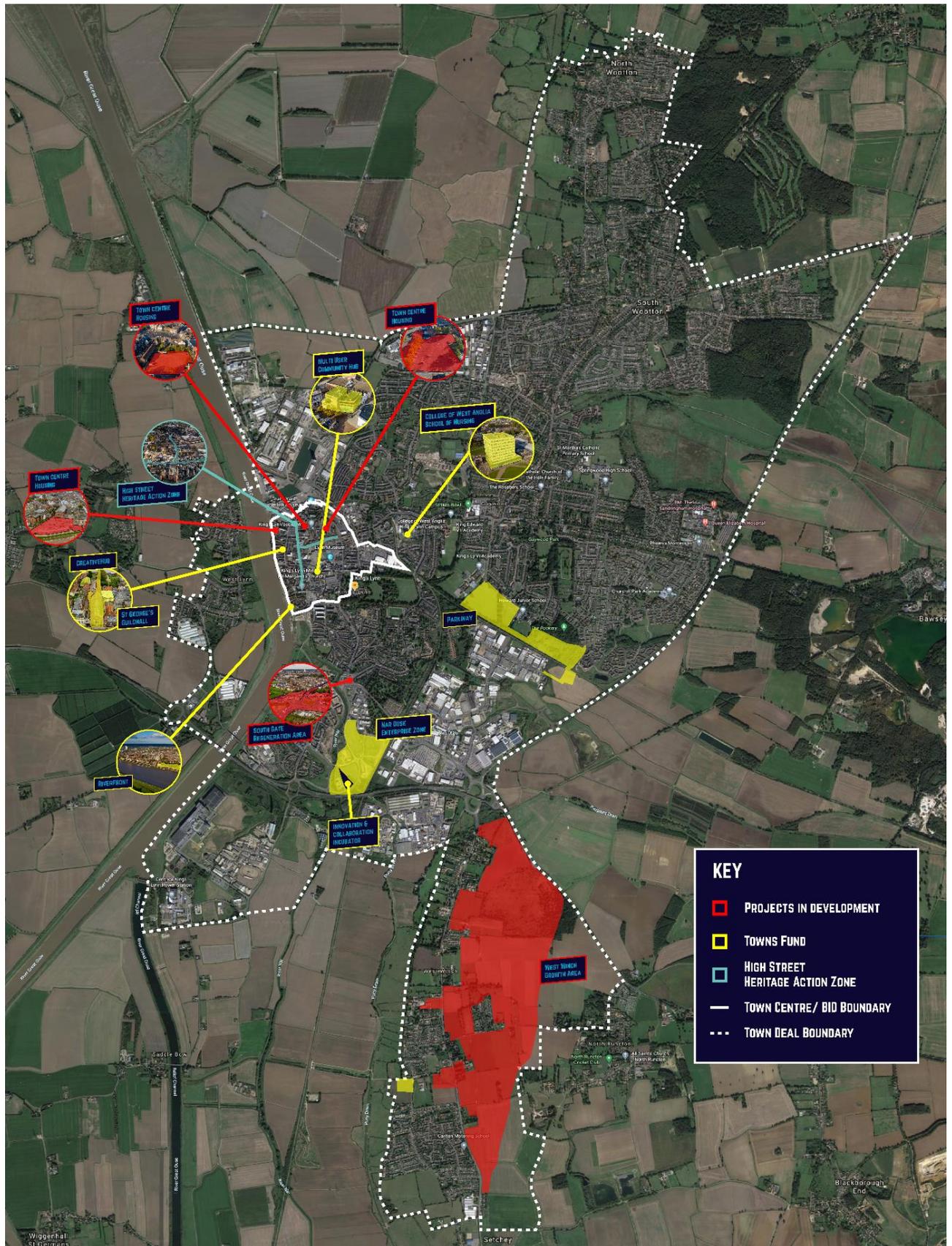
King's Lynn will continue to deliver the high-quality housing required to meet the needs of a growing and young population, with 1,718 new homes delivered since 2010 and more than 5,000 planned. Alongside the need to prioritise town centre densification, as set out above, we are also delivering the major growth areas in West Winch, South Wootton and Parkway. West Winch will deliver 4,000 homes alone, and require major new transport investment, including in clean and active travel to connect to local schools, employment areas and countryside.

Our aim is to ensure all our housing areas are well connected with active and clean travel options, including to nearby schools, employment sites and the town centre.

Interventions

- Active travel and clean air programmes, Town centre housing, Town centre repurposing and public realm programmes described above.

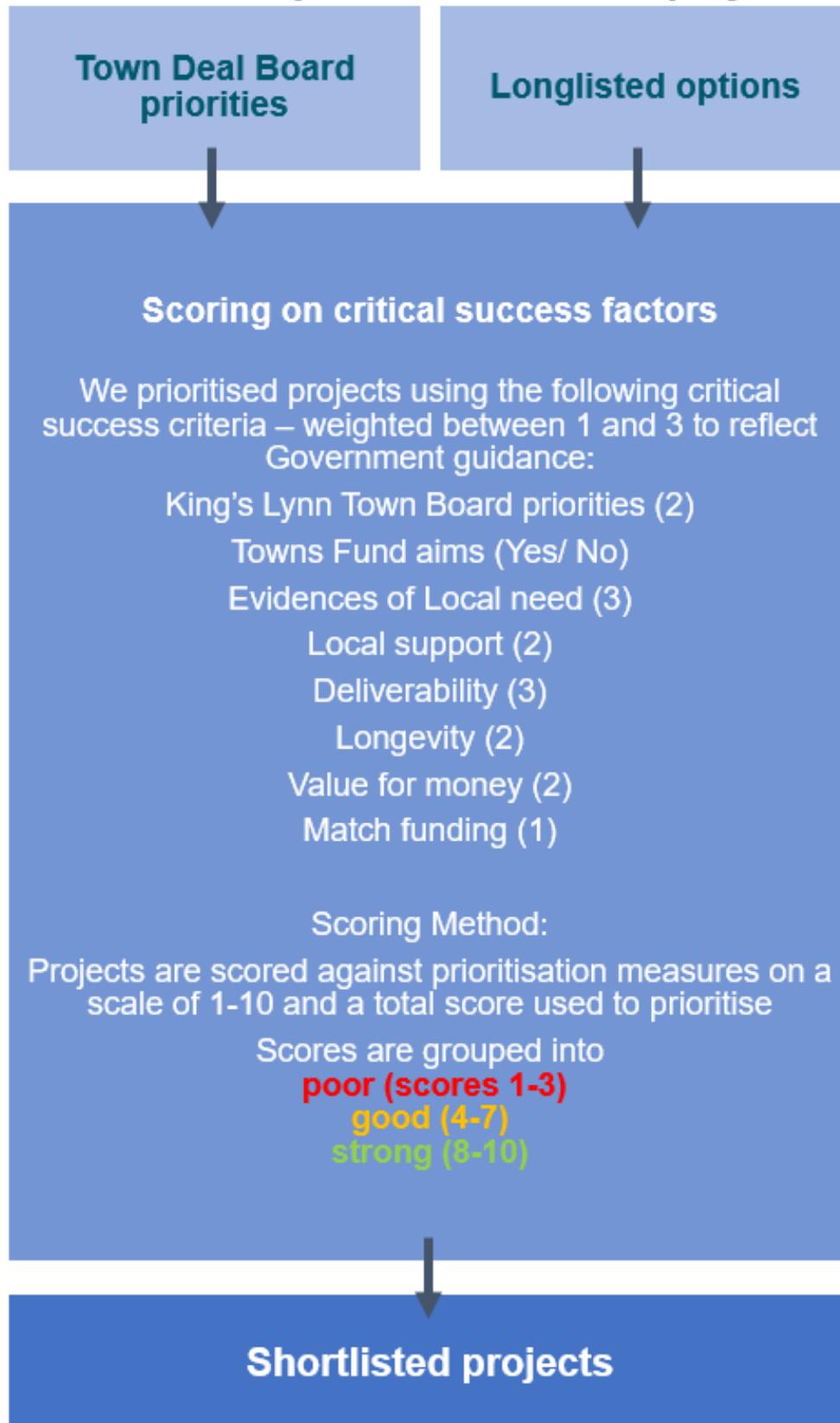
Location of all Town Investment Plan Interventions



The following sections set out how we are planning to deliver the aims above:

Delivering our priorities

Prioritisation process to shortlist projects



1. New opportunities for skills and jobs for our young people and all those affected by Covid-19 and needing to reskill, linked to demand from local employers and opportunities in local sectors

Towns Fund Projects

King's Lynn Youth and Retraining Pledge

Multiuser Community Hub

School of Nursing (funded with TF accelerated funding and underway)

What we want to achieve:

In the next two years...

- Supporting young people and people affected by redundancy to gain new, relevant skills

In the longer term...

- Developing a local talent pipeline to support the needs and ambitions of local businesses
- Establishing a skills support hub in King's Lynn for local people to have a physical home for life and employment skills support

How we will achieve our aims:

King's Lynn Youth Pledge and Retraining Support	
Funding	£450k revenue
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in capacity and accessibility to new skills facilities • Increased and closer collaboration with employers • Increase in the breadth of the local skills offer that responds to employer needs • Increased benefit for the public education over the longer term
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 335 new learners assisted into employment • Increase in working-age population with qualifications
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people want to pursue careers in King's Lynn • Businesses struggle to recruit for the right skills locally

As we have set out, the evidence is clear that the need in King's Lynn is greater than surrounding areas, and likely to increase in the coming months. Young people have expressed ambitions to stay in King's Lynn to pursue their careers, and businesses we've spoken to say they struggle to connect to and recruit the right talent. Existing region-wide provision for skills and employability support is not designed to meet this local demand and there is evidence that a range of providers struggle to deliver effectively in King's Lynn¹⁷. The College of West Anglia, Council and business partners have come together to put in place a package of support for youth skills and adult retraining provision that will focus on the immediate and short-term impact of Covid-19. A King's Lynn Youth Pledge will focus skills and employability support on local under 30s - who have been hit by the labour market impacts of Covid-19.

For those being made redundant and facing change in their career path, a King's Lynn Retraining Pledge will support people to diversify their skills and return to employment. This programme of support will connect talent to local businesses - both for skills transfer and employment opportunities. This will perform the double function of providing new skills and networking exposure for individuals as well as support for businesses to collaborate and connect to local talent.

By supporting King's Lynn with revenue funding now, across two financial years, the Towns Fund would add local capacity for delivering skills, employment and business support at a time when the town is feeling the impact of Covid-19 on the futures of young people and local businesses.

The Youth and Retraining Pledge will connect to priority enterprise projects in King's Lynn's Town Investment Plan: the Multiuser Community Hub, Creative Hub and Innovation and Collaboration Incubator. Activity will include working with businesses to understand skills requirements and offer of experience with individual skills development clients.

¹⁷ WSP analysis for Norfolk County Council, August 2020.

Multiuser Community Hub

Funding	£4.36m capital	£2m match funding from Norfolk County Council
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New community centre in the town centre • Development of an abandoned site on the high street • Increase in capacity to deliver skills provision 	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,200 new learners assisted with skills and into employment, 7.5% job ready • Improved perception of place by residents and businesses 	
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people have expressed the need for more accessible training and learning in the town centre, related to local jobs • Businesses have difficulties with employability skills 	



King's Lynn's skills and employability needs are recognised by providers and commissioners, but evidence shows that provision has not been delivered at the levels and in the learning areas needed, with suitable space being a major factor.¹⁸ There is also a lack of visible signposting joining up the provision available locally and connecting individuals to programmes¹⁹. This points to a need for a visible physical home for wider skills and employability support in the area, connecting employers and local people in better ways than they have said operates here. The project design reflects clear input from young people on

¹⁸ WSP analysis for Norfolk County Council, August 2020.

¹⁹ King's Lynn stakeholder workshop feedback, 2020.

need for more town centre, accessible, training and learning related to local jobs and from businesses on difficulties with employability skills. Covid-19 and the disproportionate impacts it has had on employment outcomes for young people in particular further strengthen the case.

A new Multiuser Community Hub will house with the library and space for social enterprises, training providers and other organisations, in order to increase accessibility and signposting to support. The project also supports repurposing the high street, by development of the former Argos building and includes public realm improvements at this key junction and nodal point on the primary route from the rail station to the riverfront, to make this underutilised area more attractive and accessible.



School of Nursing (funded and underway)

Funding	£597,528 TF accelerated funding capital	£32,530 match funding from the College of West Anglia
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in higher level skills offer responding to local skills needs • New nursing skills facilities increasing accessibility to local people • 2 new clinical simulation suites and specialist equipment 	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 150 new learners assisted • 4 hospital beds and additional nursing capacity for Queen Elizabeth Hospital 	

The College of West Anglia, in partnership with Anglia Ruskin University and the Hospital, is developing a new School of Nursing. This project is funded and underway, and is due to open in September 2021.

The lack of local nurse training has led to persistent nurse vacancies at the Hospital, with high turnover and resource spent on recruiting from overseas. In November 2019, following a global recruitment campaign, the qualified nurse vacancy rate stood at 5.2%. This reflects a national challenge, and adding training capacity in King's Lynn would contribute to the Government's manifesto commitment to recruit an additional 50,000 nurses.



Young people in King's Lynn are less likely to progress onto higher education than elsewhere in the country. With the nearest nursing training more than 40 miles away, this presents an opportunity to offer higher-level skills training locally in a sector visibly growing in importance, in partnership with an anchor institution for the wider area – the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

This project will address both immediate demand for new skills training, and provide a growing future of training for a more highly-skilled local talent pipeline.

2. Growing innovative businesses - attracted by our connectivity and high quality of life and supported by the networks and collaborative support that businesses need

Projects

Innovation and Collaboration Incubator

Creative Hub and Guildhall Complex

King's Lynn Youth and Retraining Pledge

King's Lynn has a supportive and collaborative business community, and strengths in manufacturing and healthcare, as well as presence in scientific and technical services. The town has a history of creative and innovative businesses, and there are new opportunities in areas that businesses want to explore and into which expand²⁰. This is evident from the engaged and collaborative forum the Town Deal Board has provided local business leaders.

We want to achieve:

- Building enterprise and industry space in the town for businesses to work, start and grow collaboratively
- Developing a local talent pipeline to support the needs and ambitions of local businesses

²⁰ King's Lynn stakeholder workshop feedback, 2020.

How we will achieve our aims:

Innovation & Collaboration Incubator		
Funding	£8m capital	£400k land value BCKLWN match
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,397sqm increase in high quality, affordable commercial floor space • Increase in the amount of shared workspace and innovation facilities 	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 167 full time jobs created • 10 enterprises utilizing high quality, affordable and sustainable commercial spaces 	
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for engineering and manufacturing related technical skills to meet the demand of local employers • Strong business demand for additional technical space with business-led wrap around support and peer-to-peer networks 	



We are continuing to develop our Enterprise Zone, and we have seen good demand for businesses wanting to be based in a part of the town with new, flexible premises.

This project development is based on consistent business input on the need for engineering and manufacturing related technical skills to meet the demand of local employers. Strong

demand for additional technical space – such as the Norwich Hethel Engineering Centre model – with business-led wrap around support and peer-to-peer networks that are now widely seen as crucial to increasing firm’s capacity to absorb and adopt new technology and innovation. Locally this is the case for our engineering, manufacturing, science and technology firms – where there is increasing cross over between the sectors and demand for specialist workplaces and spaces for demonstrator and R&D projects post-Covid-19 as they are not activities that can be carried out remotely.

We are therefore proposing a new Innovation and Collaboration Incubator for local businesses specialising in manufacturing, engineering and related business demand (which is likely to include firms in science and agritech, for example). The new facility based on the Enterprise Zone will provide 36000sqft of commercial workshop, office and coworking spaces for new and growing manufacturing businesses. Innovation and collaboration will be delivered by an operator model designed to provide the networks, wider support and training with organisations like the College of West Anglia and University of East Anglia and networks as has been proven successful on similar sites

A priority of the Town Deal Board is to ensure that businesses in this new space will be supported in offering skills opportunities to young people and those retraining, as well as exposure to the local talent pool. Businesses and individuals will benefit from a local network sharing practices on new ways of working and delivering training.

Creative Hub and Guildhall Complex	
Funding	£4.85m capital £3.9m match funding from Heritage Lottery Fund, BCKLWN capital and land value,
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New arts venue and refurbished theatre • Upgraded historical building • 575 sqm increase in high quality shared workspace and innovation space
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for 20 businesses and 50 entrepreneurs and startups • 90k more visitors per year to cultural, theatre, arts events and spaces • Improved perception of the place by residents/visitors
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local people have expressed demand for new town centre cultural opportunities • Creative businesses lack shared and community accessible workshop and maker space

King’s Lynn has a thriving cultural and artistic sector serving its wide catchment area of over 200,000 people. Since the closure of Arts Centre in 2015 this cluster has been without a home and there is strong demand from the sector and community for additional facilities and assets

to both strengthen the offer and enable the sector to grow. The Guildhall has a unique theatrical heritage and strong brand, as the oldest living theatre in England and the only one which can claim Shakespeare performed on its stage (in 1593).

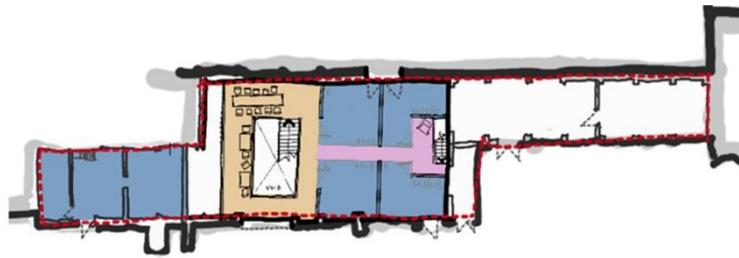
The design of this project reflects input from local people on need for new town centre cultural opportunities, and from creative businesses on the lack of shared and community accessible workshop and maker space.

This investment will create a new, updated, visitor economy asset, boosting visitor numbers and creating a new asset that will meet the needs of the local creative sector and community, with strong community access and education delivered by local creative organisations, which would not otherwise be able to do so. The performance space will be available for a wide range of community uses and groups.

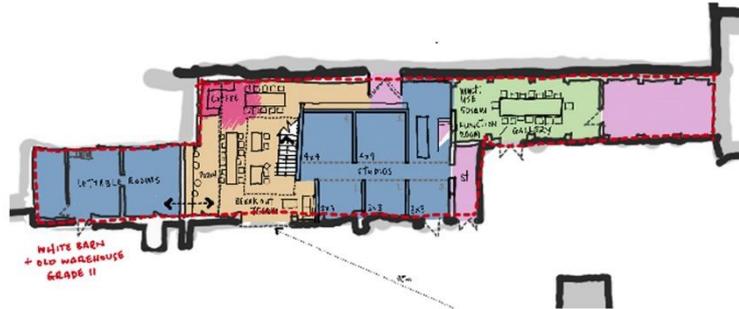
The project has two elements.

First, it involves the renovation of the medieval Grade 1-listed building, the oldest working theatre in England, into a multifunctional space by updating the main theatre (last refurbished in the 1950s). This part of the project will create a multifunctional space for community and local arts organisations, with a focus on performance, creative learning and rehearsal use, boosting the arts and cultural experience and education for residents and improving the visitor offer, through its strong links to the Shakespeare brand and through a stronger programme of live performances and events.

Secondly, the project will repurpose the White Barn part of the wider Guildhall complex to create a Creative Hub, with flexible and digitally enabled shared work and maker space and studio space, which will support creative businesses to collaborate, develop skills and grow. The Hub will upgrade two floors of the building and include 575msq creative workspace. The hub sits at the heart of a wider delivery plan to nurture and grow King's Lynn's creative community, based on detailed engagement with this thriving cluster that serves a wide catchment area of over 200,000 people and is increasingly attracting artists and makers drawn by the historic town centre, waterfront, affordable housing and good transport links to Cambridge and London.



First Floor



Ground Floor

KINGS LYNN CREATIVE HUB
 WHITE BARN OPTION
 NOT TO SCALE
 2/01/19



3. A repurposed town centre with new experiences and businesses-increasing footfall, enhancing cultural opportunities, with its different parts better connected

Projects

Town Centre Repurposing

Public Realm

We want to achieve:

- Higher density and living in the town centre
- New experiences, cultural and night time events in the town centre

How we will achieve our aims:

Town Centre Repurposing	
Funding	<p>£1.75m capital</p> <p>£1.55m match from housing associations and unit tenants</p>
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of 30 new quality residential units in the town centre • Delivery of new commercial space for 10 pop up business opportunities • Development of 3 abandoned sites
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased footfall in the town centre • Improved perception of the place by residents, visitors and businesses
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New opportunities for short term commercial / pop up spaces was 1 of 3 top priorities raised by both consumers and businesses in the July 2020 Vision King's Lynn confidence survey.

Residents and businesses have expressed growing concern at the accelerating rate of retail units becoming vacant, and have shown a real desire to repurpose the retail centre for new

and different experiences. This project aims to rejuvenate King’s Lynn’s town centre by repurposing vacant units into business/living spaces. Repurposed units will be occupied by businesses, leisure and community uses on the ground floor and facilitate town centre living on the above floor(s), their new function will increase footfall and spend in the town centre, as well as improve the health and appearance of the high street.

The repurposed units will house multiple businesses in a ‘market hall’ style business model. Traders will be offered flexible rates and a central location, as well as the opportunity to be part of a new draw to the town centre. This would build a nighttime economy and new experiences.

Public Realm	
Funding	<p>£250k capital</p> <p>£50k match funding from Norfolk Strategic Fund Tourism Sector Support</p>
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved public spaces in the town centre • 5 upgraded commercial spaces and physical assets in the town centre • 5 upgraded cycling and walking paths
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased footfall in the town centre • Improved perception of place by residents, visitors and businesses
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor seating and new spaces for pop up businesses, cafés and restaurants the top priority for both consumers and businesses in the July 2020 Vision King’s Lynn consumer confidence survey • In consultation events for the Town Investment Plan, Business and local people all reported consistent views that the town centre and historic riverside are not as well looked after and connected as they should be, leading to people visiting less and spending less time in the town centre than they would otherwise do.

Businesses, local people and community groups we have spoken to consistently say that the town centre and historic riverside are not as well looked after and connected as they could be, but are also a real opportunity to improve and attract visitors, new residents and business activity.

The intervention for repurposing the town centre requires improving the physical attractiveness of the town centre alongside to complement and maximise the benefits both aim to achieve. The public realm fund is a capital ask to deliver interventions highlighted in the recently prepared public realm action plan, with the first phase enhancement to the High Street already underway through the Towns Fund Accelerated funding.

The aim of the project is to improve the perception of the town centre, creating a quality and distinctive public realm, softening the townscape, support the infrastructure for town centre

living and prioritising active travel. The purpose of this project is to improve and make better use of the public realm - creating a safe, vibrant, and attractive town centre.

Interventions will be codesigned with local businesses with support from the Business Improvement District and local stakeholders. Interventions are envisioned to include outdoor seating provision, expanded pedestrianisation, new cycle facilities, provision for outdoor pop up stalls for small/startup businesses, street furniture renewal, art and greenspaces. The timing of this proposal aligns with a responsibility to support reopening the town centre following Covid-19.



4. A high-quality residential offer in the historic town core and riverfront, attracting new people to live and work in the town centre, whilst protecting our unique heritage.

Projects

Riverfront Regeneration

Town Centre Housing (project in development pipeline)

What we want to achieve:

- Increased density and living in the town centre
- Rejuvenated historic riverfront for visitors and residents

How we will achieve our aims:

Riverfront Regeneration	
Funding	<p>£5.85m capital</p> <p>£1.425m match from BCKLWN land value and capital programme</p>
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and remediation of 2 abandoned sites Preparation for delivery of new residential offer in historic town core
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved perceptions of the place by residents, visitors and businesses 5k more visitors to public space Enabling investment in the area in hospitality and leisure, supporting 5 businesses
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local people, community organisations and businesses say the historic riverfront is a real underutilised asset, and an opportunity to bring more visitors, businesses and activity to come and stay in the town

King's Lynn's most distinctive asset to visitors is the historic riverfront. With the nature of the tourist industry changing due to the impact of Covid-19, there is heightened interest in the visitor economy in the UK, and new opportunities in new places. Local people and community groups have inputted that restoring the historic core is a real opportunity for enhancing attractions, events, and visitor stays in the town. The Town Deal Board agrees that a renewal priority for the town should be to aim for more people to live in the town centre, particularly to attract new residents by capitalising on the rail connection to Cambridge.

Reviving historic cultural assets in this part of the town and pivoting activity to building the visitor economy around King's Lynn's historic identity would provide new cultural opportunities, create jobs, and create a new community living in this part of the town centre to support and grow local businesses.

This project constitutes the first phase of regeneration for King's Lynn's riverfront. Investment in new outdoor public realm and upgraded attractions and facilities will improve the environment in preparation for further investment in leisure and residential development on this site.

A riverside route will create continuous public landscape from the Outer Purfleet quayside to the Nar Loop - an ecological open space with potential to create a wetland habitat. This will combine civic character landscaping of the quayside with natural landscapes to the south of the town centre. The key element will be a Riverside Linear Park along the South Quay and Boal Quay. This enhanced continuity of space will provide extended leisure and recreation space will connect improved outdoor space along the river from the entrypoint of the riverside at Customs House with the open landscapes to the south of the town.



This phase will also bring into use the Outer Purfleet dock for feature vessels and iconic Customs House as a visitor exhibition space - a key entrypoint and landmark from the end of the high street to the riverside - with dryside infrastructure for the visitor pontoons as part of the wider 'Sail the Wash' initiative and marketing campaign. This will be an enabling step for investment in residential, hospitality, leisure and culture - of which there is ongoing interest - at this part of the riverfront.

Town Centre Housing (in development pipeline)	
Funding	£10.78m capital
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery of 169 new quality residential units in the town centre • Remediation of dilapidated sites • Delivery of strategic parking sites in the town centre
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased living and footfall in the town centre • Improved vehicle flow in the town centre • Improved perception of the place by residents, visitors and businesses

This scheme includes the relocation of parts of four existing town centre car parks to a new less prominent peripheral site to provide space for 169 high-quality houses and flats –

including affordable housing – in the historic core of King’s Lynn. This project is part of the wider Heritage Action Zone initiative with Historic England

This will provide new town centre residential offer, increasing density and footfall, and increasing the attractiveness of the town centre.

5. A sustainably connected town - through reduced congestion and better connectivity between the town, its catchment area and residential growth areas, creating safer walking and cycling routes and supporting remote working

Projects

Active and Clean Connectivity

South Gate Regeneration Area (project in development pipeline)

Road congestion is high around the town and town centre, with air quality issues resulting in an air quality management area at a gateway into the town centre. Car ownership is high in King’s Lynn, with a large rural hinterland that will continue to rely on car use. However, cycling and walking levels are higher than in other places, and there is the opportunity since people’s travelling has changed during the pandemic, to enable the maximization of cycling and walking for local travel and part of the wider leisure and tourist offer.

What we want to achieve:

- Improved active travel links
- Reduced congestion and better connectivity between the town, its catchment area and residential growth areas

How we will achieve our aims:

Active and Clean Connectivity		
Funding	£7.5m capital	£9.89m match funding from Homes England ACP, BCKLWN land value, Business Rates Pool
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New local active travel provision for walking and cycling • New links to Enterprise Zone and Hardwick Industrial Estate • Improved gyratory system to ease congestion 	
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved air quality • Unlocking 100,000sq ft commercial land for development • New infrastructure to support 379 new homes 	
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved cycle routes and storage was 1 of 3 top priorities raised in the business and consumer confidence survey carried out in July 2020 for Vision King's Lynn. • Local people and businesses are concerned by road congestion, poor air quality, and a lack of active and safe travel routes into the town centre 	

The active and clean connectivity package is a series of interventions to prevent future congestion and air pollution, in response to the proposed housing delivery of 380 new homes and employment growth in the Enterprise Zone and West Winch growth area.

Public and business feedback has been clear on road congestion in the town centre, poor air quality, and a lack of active and safe travel routes into the town centre.

The proposed development comprises of three elements, to form an active & clean connectivity package. Projects are 'shovel ready' and respond to local transport and air quality demands. The elements are the gyratory system, Parkway bridge and the Enterprise Zone Active Travel Hub.

The gyratory system will reconfigure the central town centre one-way system. This encompasses Railway Road, Blackfriars Road and Austin Street. It will introduce two way working on roads and include changes to cross streets. It will also include measures to assist public transport, walking, cycling and public realm to improve connectivity to the town centre.

The project will help to address the air pollution and congestion around the town centre, with the area being designated an Air Quality Management Area.

South Gates (in development pipeline)

Funding	£20m capital
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New and upgraded road infrastructure and enlarged roundabout• Restoration of historic site and public realm regeneration• Upgraded walking and cycling paths
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improved air quality• Improved vehicle flow into and around the town centre• Improved perception of the place by residents, visitors and businesses

South Gates is in a strategic regeneration area for King's Lynn for the Heritage Action Zone programme and is a transport priority. The scheme will improve the main access to the town centre by diverting traffic round the historic Southgate. By diverting traffic, the road reconfiguration will protect the historic gateway into the town, improve traffic flow and reduce congestion, improve air quality, and provide additional walkway and cycleway space. This will also improve town centre accessibility for pedestrian and cyclists as well as vehicles. The project is the first phase of implementation for wider redevelopment of Southgates for which the Council has been strategically acquiring sites to facilitate comprehensive redevelopment and further highway improvements of the roundabout.



The table below sets out the theory of change behind our approach for selecting the Town Deal funded projects. It shows a clear logic chain for each individual project, including rationale, inputs, outputs, outcomes, and the overall impact:

Theory of Change 1/2

Town Board Priority	Innovative, growing businesses and a skilled workforce			Sustainably connected town		Repurposed historic riverfront and town centre		
Context	<p>King's Lynn has major strengths in healthcare, the highest employing sector at 21%; manufacturing, with 16% of employment; and a strong set of creative businesses. However, there are challenges around lower levels of skills, recruitment and retention of young people, as well as fewer businesses starting up. Covid-19's emerging impacts on youth unemployment and contraction in areas such as retail and manufacturing further exacerbates these challenges.</p>			<p>The town centre is congested with road traffic and includes air pollution management areas. Cycling and walking is higher than average, but driven by congestion and not seen as a safe option.</p>		<p>King's Lynn's historic core and riverfront is a major physical asset, offering significant potential for higher density residential and new business uses alongside future retail and leisure experiences. But it is poorly connected and underused. The role of the retail centre of the town is changing - the economic impact of Covid-19 has accelerated long-term trends in falling footfall, and retail units continue to become vacant.</p>		
Project	Youth and Retraining Pledge	St Georges Guildhall Complex	Multiuser Community Hub	Innovation and Collaboration Incubator	Active and Clean Connectivity	Public Realm	Town Centre Repurposing	Riverfront Regeneration
Rationale	<p>Progression from school, attainment and youth unemployment are all less strong in King's Lynn than the local and regional averages. The population is younger and with rising youth JSA claimants, we risk significant long term damage to young people's futures. Other people coming into the labour market due to Covid-19 need opportunities to re / upskill. We need, therefore, to provide additional capacity and support to cohorts who have been worst hit by the economic impact of the pandemic and boost support for long-term weaknesses in the local labour market.</p>	<p>King's Lynn has a thriving cultural and artistic sector serving its wide catchment area of over 200,000 people. Since the closure of Arts Centre in 2015 this cluster has been without a home and there is strong demand from the sector and community for additional facilities and assets to both strengthen the offer and enable the sector to grow. The Guildhall has a unique theatrical heritage and strong brand, as the oldest living theatre in England and the only one which can claim Shakespeare performed on its stage (in 1593).</p>	<p>King's Lynn's skills and employability needs are recognised by providers and commissioners, but evidence shows that provision has not been delivered at the levels and in the learning areas needed, with suitable space being a major factor. There is also a lack of visible signposting joining up the provision available locally and connecting individuals to programmes. This points to a need for a visible physical home for wider skills and employability support in the area, connecting employers and local people in better ways than they have said operates here.</p>	<p>New space and innovation support focused on meeting ongoing demand for grow on space and incubator space, with the wrap around support networks need to enable businesses to collaborate, learn and demonstrate innovation. This is crucial to successful adaptation, particularly in manufacturing - based on the highly successful Hethel centre.</p>	<p>The active and clean connectivity package is a series of interventions to reduce existing congestion and air pollution and to increase clean and active travel options, as we develop out major housing growth areas (7,800 homes).</p>	<p>Falling high street footfall in line with national trends and heightened by Covid-19, in combination with an underused historic core of the town, leaves opportunity to repurpose key areas in the town centre with public realm support</p>	<p>To support reopening and changing use of the town centre and its buildings, including empty shops, through outdoor seating provision, expanded pedestrianisation, new cycle facilities, provision for outdoor pop up stalls for small/startup businesses, street furniture renewal, art and greenspaces.</p>	<p>Private sector investment requires support to make the long term redevelopment viable and to unlock initial investment in leisure, residential and hotel facilities. This includes flood defences, site remediation due to contamination and public realm.</p>

Theory of Change 2/2

Inputs	Towns Fund £450k revenue	Towns Fund £4.85m Match funding £3.9m	Towns Fund £4.36m Match funding £2m	Towns Fund £8m BCKLWN land value £400k	Towns Fund £7.5m Match funding and land value £9.89m	Towns Fund £250k Match funding £50k	Towns Fund £1.75m Match funding £1.55m	Towns Fund £5.85m Match funding and land value £1.425m
Outputs	Skills provision and business support for young people, people retraining, and innovative businesses to grow	575sqm high quality shared workspace and innovation space Upgraded historic theatre	New town centre community hub on abandoned site Increased skills provision	3,397sqm of commercial space for new and growing manufacturing businesses	New cycle and pedestrian links Reconfigured one-way gyratory system New links to Enterprise Zone and Hardwick Industrial Estate	Improved town centre public spaces 5 upgraded commercial spaces 5 upgraded cycling and walking paths	30 new quality residential units 10 pop up business spaces 3 abandoned sites developed	2 remediated sites opening up regeneration to hospitality, culture and residential investment development
Outcomes	335 learners assisted Better connected businesses with local talent	Space for 20 creative businesses and 50 entrepreneurs and startups Increase in 90k visitors per year	5,200 learners assisted 7.5% job ready Improved high street	167 full time jobs 10 enterprises supported	Improved air quality Unlocking 100,000sqft commercial space Supporting 379 new homes	Enhanced outdoor space for eating, markets and events Improved experience and flow through town centre	Increased visits in the town centre for experiences Increased living in the town centre	Increase of 5k visitors for leisure and culture offer in historic core Supporting 5 businesses New living opportunities with great quality of life
Impact	Developing the local skills pipeline for local employment opportunities Supporting businesses to be more productive, innovative and grow				Building clean sustainable new transport links connecting growth areas	Creating a town where people want to come to live and stay Repurposing the town centre and historic assets		

3 Engagement and delivery

Community and business engagement

Genuine codesign and engagement with local people has been absolutely central to developing a new approach in King's Lynn over the last 2 years. In 2018, partners set up the Vision King's Lynn initiative, to enable the local community itself to build a vision and plan for the future that integrated all local regeneration and placement activity and investment. More than 500 subscribers remain engaged in ongoing conversation and the development of Future High Streets Fund projects and the Town Investment Plan. The Vision King's Lynn website and social media channels are a hub of active input and ideas, as well as updates.

The Town Deal Board has integrated into this community process. Members include community and voluntary organisations alongside local businesses, the college, anchor institutions and elected members. The Board has met monthly since January with a programme of in-depth workshops. It has been a constructive process driven by evidence and experience.

The Board has brought together the insights and contribution of different parts of the community to ensure we have a detailed understanding of the needs, challenges, and concerns of different parts of the community. Ideas, discussions and challenges have created a plan with a practical focus and real backing for the future vision for King's Lynn.

The local media have also been fully involved, with consistent constructive and thoughtful media coverage.

Our community and business engagement in more recent months has also focussed on the impact of Covid-19, through workshops with local businesses and community stakeholders, and targeted consultation with young people. More detail is set out below:

Consumers

We carried out a consumer sentiment survey in June to understand people's views on reopening the town centre. Concerns expressed including safety in reopening, uncertainty about the future, and the accelerated shift to reliance on online retail and services.

Consumers were keen to return to access high street brands but wanted to see open space used in new ways, including outdoor seating for cafes and restaurants, outdoor event space, and space for pop up retail and leisure/entertainment opportunities. It was also clear that car use was increasing at least in the short term.

Young people

As well as surveying more than 200 young people in King's Lynn we engaged youth groups in workshops on hopes and concerns for the future of the town, including the West Norfolk Youth Advisory Board. Participants were ambitious to re-purpose empty shop units with pop

up uses and independent retailers, facilitating new leisure activities, and making the town centre more attractive. The saw opportunities for enterprise and new businesses. Concerns were congested roads, infrequent bus services, and a lack of safe cycleways.

Interestingly, a majority of young people (64%) expressed a desire to stay in the area, with top career aspirations in health and social care, arts, culture, and education.

Businesses

For the majority of businesses engaged (69%), Covid-19 has ‘significantly’ affected their business. Many used the Government furlough scheme for staff members, and operations have been adapted. Working from home for all sizes of firm was a challenge, of those surveyed, 75% said staff were unable to work from home, and 82% of those did not have plans to enable staff to do so. Many of King’s Lynn’s businesses work in manufacturing, and specialist workspaces are vital to the industry.

Along with financial concerns and uncertainty around future trading, many businesses in King’s Lynn cited concerns around a reliance on physical presence for their business. While 64% of survey respondents said they were confident their business could recover, there was a keen request for business support in the town to help through this period and planning for the future.

Businesses said they struggle to recruit the right skills locally to enable them to innovate and grow. They wanted the town to be more attractive for people to move and stay, making the most of cultural assets and the direct rail link to London.

VCS and community groups

Culture and heritage community partners in King’s Lynn recognised an opportunity to revitalise the town’s cultural offer. Suggestions included improving the physical attractiveness and signage around the town, improving the flow from the railway station through the high street to the historic core, greening and outdoor artwork, cycle infrastructure including cycle racks in the town centre, creating opportunities for festivals and events, and introducing pedestrianisation in spots such as the Tuesday Market Place – currently containing car parking.

VCS and community organisations supporting people through the impact of Covid-19 expressed ambitions around enabling online offer of services, supporting those not online, and ensuring additional provision and improved signposting for skills and employability support for those becoming unemployed or in long-term unemployment.

Forward engagement plan

The Town Board and Council are committed to continuing this broad based and highly effective process of community and partner engagement. The Town Board will continue to meet monthly to oversee progress and resolve issues. Our forward plan is set out below:

Delivery plan

Governance

For all projects, the **Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk is the accountable body** for the Towns Fund investment. Our s.151 officer therefore takes responsibility for proper use of funds as agreed in Heads of Terms with Government.

The Council will manage the delivery of projects where we are the lead, and will provide oversight where partners are leading delivery.

The **Town Deal Board will continue to meet as a local forum** of business and community leaders on the future of King's Lynn and collaborating on their priorities. The Board will input into steering the delivery of projects through the agreement of Heads of Terms.

Youth and Retraining Pledge

Shovel ready?	Yes
Project lead	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk partnering with Norfolk County Council, College of West Anglia and skills providers
Project status	Ready to implement programme with partners

Creative Hub and Guildhall Complex

Shovel ready?	No
Project lead	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk partnering with creative workspace managers
Project status	Finalise design and operational plans with partners

Innovation and Collaboration Incubator

Shovel ready?	No
Project lead	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk with Norfolk County Council and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership
Project status	Finalise design and operational plans with partners

Active and Clean Connectivity

Shovel ready?	No
Project lead	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk with Norfolk County Council
Project status	Ready to implement programme with partners

Public Realm

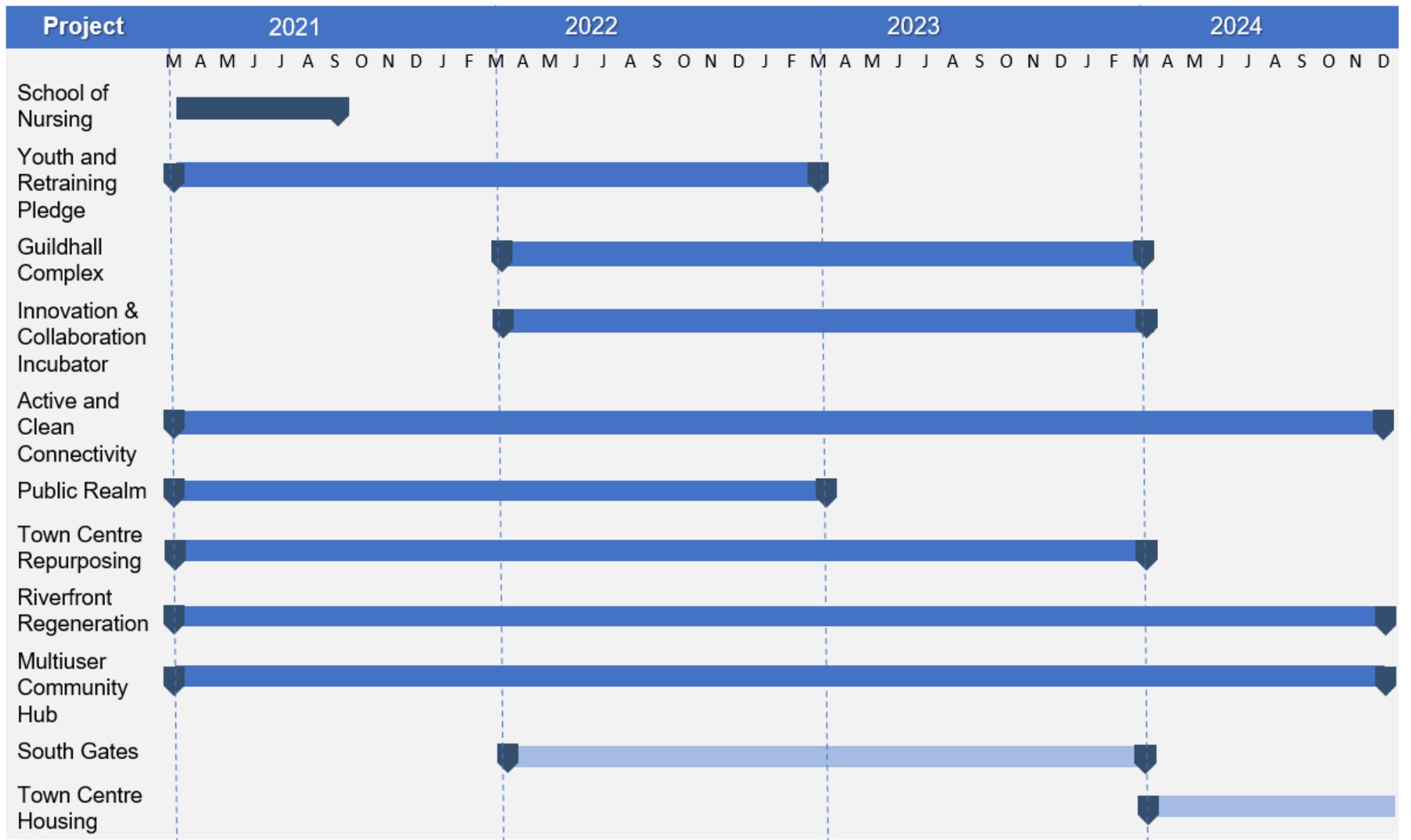
Shovel ready?	Yes
Project lead	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
Project status	Ready to implement programme with partners

Town Centre Repurposing

Shovel ready?	No
Project lead	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk with Norfolk County Council
Project status	Ready to implement programme of site acquisition and development with partners

Riverfront Regeneration

Shovel ready?	No
Project lead	Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
Project status	Finalise design, operational and implementation plans with partners





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